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MARCH. Vol. 1, No. 2.

Journal of the Amusement Equipment Industry

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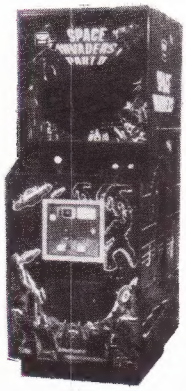

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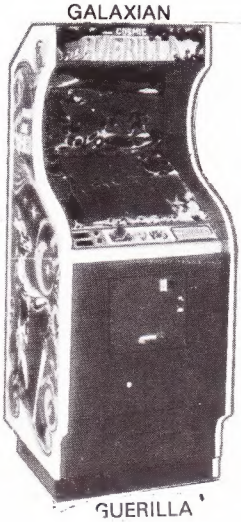

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COMMENT

All is not well down on the South Coast. The amusement machine industry is locked in a conflict where it would least expect to do battle — in a popular seaside resort.

Bournemouth, it seems, do not share the current enthusiasm for the video machine. A recent bye-law decrees that amusement machines may only be operated on sea-front premises — and Bournemouth Corporation owns the sea-front.

The thinking behind this is rather puzzling and when one examines the recent statements of some Bournemouth councillors the situation becomes even more complex.

One councillor described the increase in the number of machines as "machine mania" and said that Bournemouth was well on the way to becoming a players' paradise, "accompanied by all that we know goes with gambling and the like."

But, as one of the Bournemouth operators was quick to point out, video machines cannot be described as gambling machines by any stretch of the imagination. It seems that some councillors in the resort see all amusement machines as gambling instruments. They have not heard that most video games demand a fair degree of skill and in many places have taken the place of lunch-time break activities such as darts and dominoes.

There is one spot that will have a good selection of amusement machines — the new leisure centre on Bournemouth's Corporation-owned Pier.

Four Corporation-owned bars on the sea-front also have video machines installed.

It seems to be a case of what's good for the goose is not good for the gander.

ANTIDOTE

At a time when many industries in Britain are having to make drastic cut-backs, the amusement machine industry is enjoying a boom. This was heavily underlined at the London and Blackpool exhibitions when sales figures broke all records.

With nearly a million and a half people unemployed it may seem strange that the industry should be going through such a healthy period.

When the outlook for the country is grim people obviously feel the need for some form of relaxation. The amusement machine industry has proved, once again, that it is capable of providing the antidote to the depression brought about by industrial recession.

LEISURE PLAY

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following 'Space Invaders'

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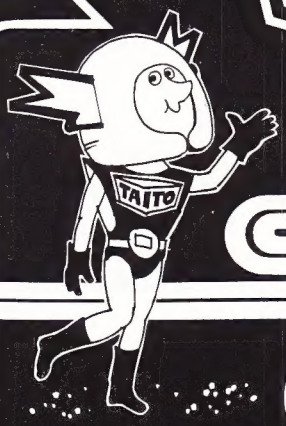

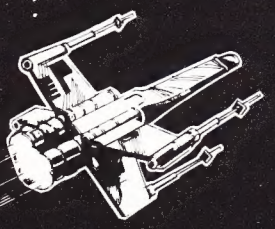

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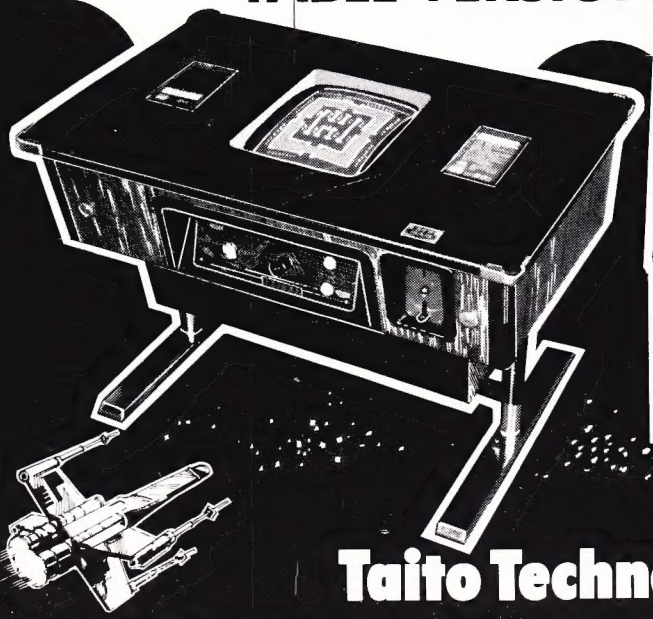

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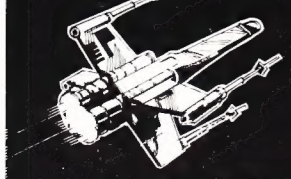

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THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH

It was the show to top all shows. The annual Amusement Trades Exhibition, 1980 — the 36th — left everyone at Alexandra Palace with broad smiles on their faces.....exhibitors, organisers and customers. Reaction from every category was the same. Nobody could remember a more successful exhibition....and that included a number of veterans who have attended evry one. the amount of business generated was phenomenal and records — in attendances, trade, and overseas visitors — fell by the hour like ripe fruit.

EXHIBITORS had never known a show like it for orders. As an experienced executive on one of the big stands put it: "I don't know where all the custom comes from in difficult times like these."

ORGANISERS declared it the best exhibition ever with a record numbr of visitors, particularly from overseas, and display standards which made it the undisputed World No. 1 in its field.

CUSTOMERS went away feeling they had been priviledged to choose from the best amusement industry equipment in the world. They underlined this by placing a record number of orders running into millions of pounds.

There was one criticism from several exhibitors — too many people who had nothing to do with the industry gained entry through the back doors.

It was estimated there were more people in the Ally Pally on the first day than on a normal Wednesday — traditionally the busiest day of the exhibition. An incredibily high proportion of visitors from overseas — particularly from Spain where the amusement trade is taking off following the lifting of the Franco regime's severe restrictions — helped swell the record attendance. Visitors arrived from every corner of the globe, including Australia, South Africa, Japan, South America, the Middle

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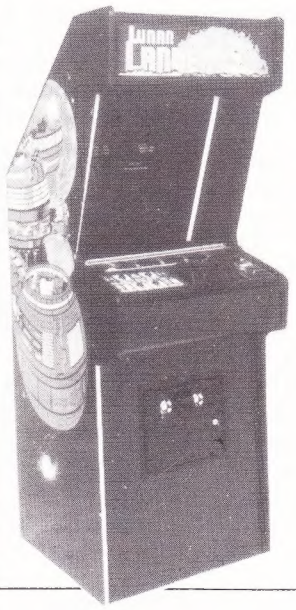

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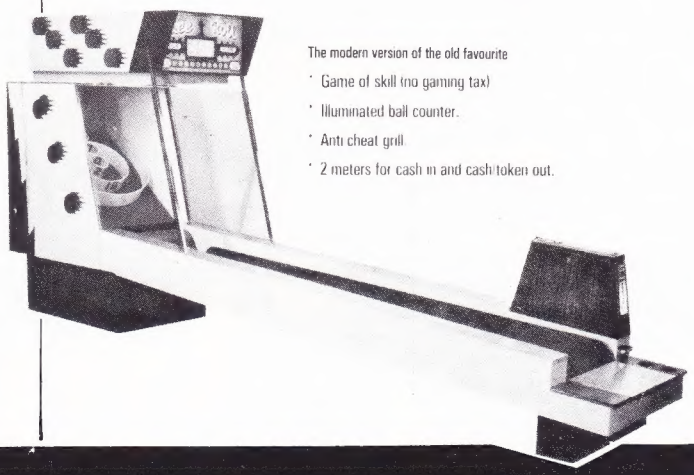

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Ameco — Always has the latest winners available!

Continued from Page 5

East, Canada and the USA.

Mr. Alan Willis, general secretary of BACTA described the exhibition as the best ever. "We were very pleased", he said. "As organisers it was our job to provide a shop window for the industry. We think the exhibitors were wonderful. The stand looked magnificent and were better than anything we have seen in other parts of the world.

"The attendance was the best yet with more people arriving on the Tuesday than a normal Wednesday, which is traditionally the busiest day of the show.

"It is without doubt the best exhibition of its kind in the world. Everything worked out smoothly and the exhibitors were delighted with the results."

Bob Deith, director of Ruffler and Deith summed up the mood of the exhibitors when he said: "It was the greatest show I have ever seen. Much as I would like to, I don't think we will ever see the like of this one again. It was a video show and there was an absolute bonanza of videos but everything else went well too. Everyone seemed in a buying mood and I have never seen such a phenomenal response. It was colossal.....but as I say, a once-in-a-lifetime show."

Mr. Nigel Booth, Managing Director of Associated Leisure Sales Ltd., said: "It was a superb exhibition and we were particularly pleased at the very good reception for our new equipment, particularly the Galaxia.

"But probably the biggest success from our point of view was the reaction to the A.L. a.w.ps machines. Before the exhibition we had an open mind as to their acceptance. All the other firms were introducing new lines. Our machines, however, were accepted as very much part of the market and we achieved unprecedented orders. We had laid our plans carefully and we make sure we have a stock of 1,500 machines available for immediate delivery.

"On the whole we were more than satisfied with the exhibition."

John Bollom from Ameco, whose stand won the prize for the best in the exhibition described the award as: "The perfect end to a perfect show". Mr. Bollom said: "It was without a doubt the best exhibition we have ever taken part in. Most of our business involves the home market - particularly the seaside trade - and the reaction was tremendous."

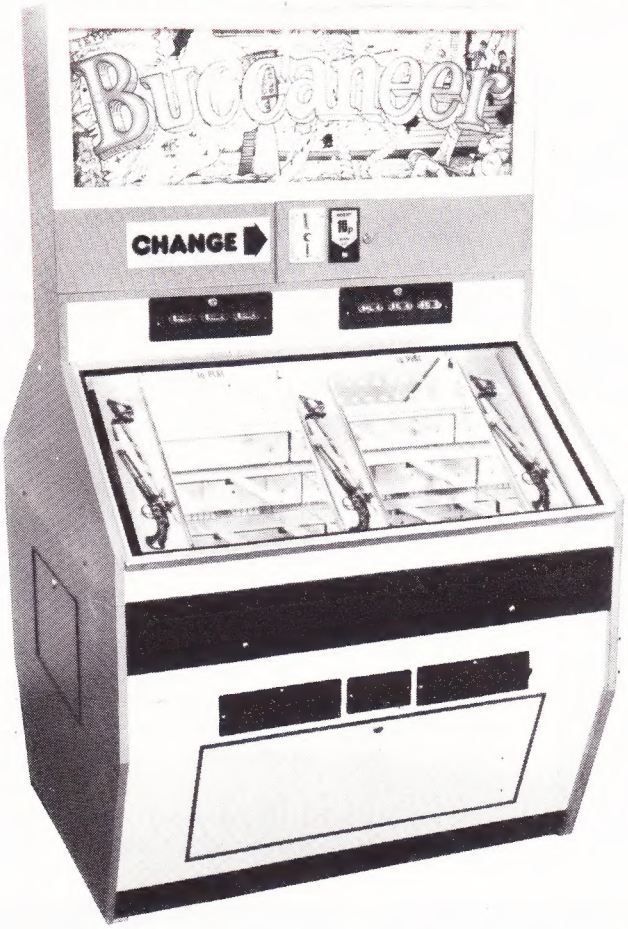
Taito, who introduced the world to the Space Invaders, were amazed at the number of foreign visitors visiting their stand. Many of them spoke little or no English and the company are considering having their own interpreters on the stand next year.

Orders for video games based on the highly successful Space Invaders poured in and staff on the stand were coping with a "full house" from the time they opened on the Tuesday right up until closing time on Thursday afternoon.

Mr. Stan McKenna, sales manager of Hazel Grove Music Co. Ltd., noticed a marked change in the attitude of customers. He said: "Last year they were having a look round but not placing their orders immediately. By the time they did place their orders many of them found that a lot of the new equipment had gone and they were left short for the summer season. There was none of that this year.

"They were appearing on the stand at one minute past ten and placing orders there and then. It was a case of shoulder-to-shoulder all day for the whole of the exhibition. It was a tremendous show — we had never seen so many people at an exhibition before. We had a full range on show this year — pool tables, video machines, juke boxes and the new wall cabinet and we did excellent business in all categories."

BIG ATTRACTION



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Above: Associated Leisure's eye-catching stand. Below: Bristol Coin Equipment's attractive stand was planned to make the best of the space available.

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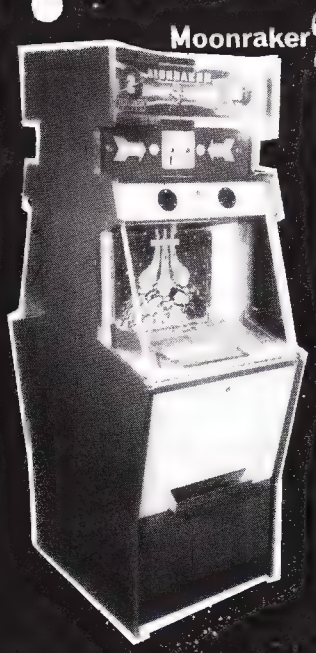

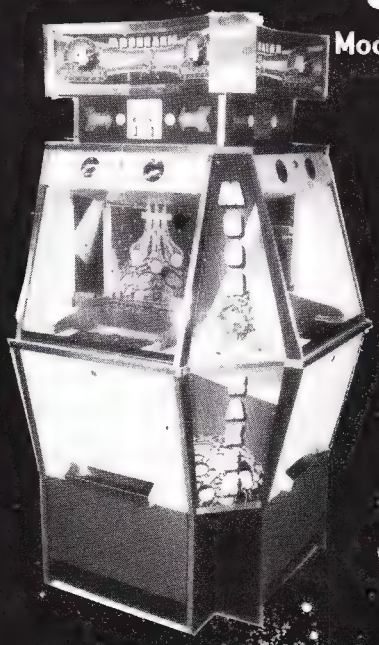

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MEM TO MANUFACTURERS: PUT US IN THE PICTURE

BY LUMINARE

Peter Drucker, famous management author stated several years ago that knowledge will be the asset that demands the price. At the moment many operators employ service mechanics and technicians who have been in their employ since the mechanical or electro-mechanical days of Jennings and Bally, on then to Signet and Thesis; each time new staff being brought in to bolster the knowledge gap. Most staff continued to earn a cleaner, better paid living with higher technical status.

Once again we see operators grabbing at new technology, with staff to fill the gap from relay and cam-bank, to opto isolator and date memory. This time however the price seems to be getting higher — no longer do our new staff have the desire to go into the field and fix machines. No! Now the faulty machine has to be returned to his highly embelished workshops where our super-man can replace the regulator, driver, triac or switching transistor. In so doing he is alienated from the customer and is alienating himself from the road technician with not only his repair cost, but inevitably the added cost of a machine standing idle, with no earning capability.

For the last 10 years road men have carried relays, micro switches, test lamps and many have used AVO meters. The majority of machines in my experience contained circuit diagrams, cam timings and component location charts. A far, far cry from today's electronic machines, that are, we may be led to believe, too delicate to have any-old service mechanic tamper with.

Amongst my old collegues I see the change in hardware, as todays tool kit has a low heat soldering iron, solder sucker, instrument pliers, snips and better quality AVO type meters; relays and micto switches gave way to ZTX500 and TIP 121 transistors. The tool box and spares box are reduced in size, incidently using less petrol to carry them around.

This giant 'con' is securing an elite workshop-based staff, who can become very secretive and militant, a backbreaking hold upon its employer. In order to diseminate the power of the fault-finding process manufacturers must do as they have done with previous electromechanical models, provide circuit diagrams, expected voltages and component locations. J.P.M. I would regard at the moment as the most forward thinking manufacturers, far ahead in provision of basic information. They also place their triacs along-side their respective soleniod loads showing the road mechanic a quick and obvious remedy. Try to obtain the same information from many other manufacturers and you will bang up against that technical barrier. They will tell you: "Send back the BOX." This keeps your machine out of order for at least one day and involved two petrol-consuming visits to your customer who wants a rebate on rents.

Whilst highly paid technical staff stay aloof from the problems encountered on site with both landlord and punter they will never be under pressure to pass-on their valuable knowledge to others and will escalate their strength and demands upon a management met by higher and higher operating costs.

News and Copy . . .

for the April edition of Leisure Play should be in the hands of the Editor no later than

THE END OF MARCH, 1980

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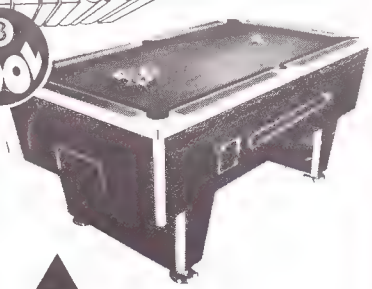

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All Change — But what will it cost?

Euromat, the organisation of European coin machine associations formed in May last year, faces a lot of tough re-organisation and upheaval during the next few years.

It embraces countries which are members of the Common Market and those on the verge of membership and has the task of bringing together amusement industries that have for generations gone their separate ways.

The changes during the next couple of decades will be tremendous – others will take place in the not-too-distant future.

Mr. John Singleton, who has been involved with the amusement industry all his working life and is now a consultant to the European Federation of Coin Machine Associations, has been an ardent European as far as the industry is concerned for years and is delighted that at last there are signs of uniformity in the European amusement trade.

"It was absolutely vital that we had a European organisation", said Mr. Singleton. "The long-term intention of the EEC is that laws in all member countries will be harmonised. This will obviously take a long time to achieve when one considers that everything from physiological to religious differences will have to be taken into consideration.

"We have got to do all we possibly can to see that no member country finds itself worse off than it is at present. The most serious problem for this industry – although it may be some years before we have to come to grips with it – will be the introduction of a common coinage.

"One thing is certain . . . it will not be based on our coinage and probably not on any existing European coinage. When this happens 90 per cent of coin operated apparatus will have to be converted or replaced and the repercussions of this will be felt beyond the confines of our own industry. Everything from launderettes and cigarette machines to telephone kiosks and ticket machines will have to be adapted. The cost of all this will be out of this world.

"But I think it is inevitable that it will happen and that is why it is so important that we make sure the system finally adopted is the one which will involve us in the least cost."

The key role of the Federation is to bring about uniformity. Although a change of coinage would be the most costly operation and the one likely to cause the most furrowed brows, there are many others.

"Electrical interference will be one of them", said Mr. Singleton". The more sophisticated machines become, the more interference they will create. But if countries deal with this problem in a piecemeal fashion, heaven knows where we shall be.

"Another major and very complicated issue, is the question of tax. Take V.A.T. for instance. At the present moment most European countries have different interpretations, particularly where it involves the amusement industry. The only fair way is to have a system that treats the amusement industries of every European country in exactly the same way. British firms launching European operations will find the varying tax systems difficult to handle.

"Safety regulations will also come into it. There will have to be complete agreement in this field too. Everything from fire precautions to electrical wiring will have to be taken into consideration.

"The need for a really strong European amusement industry association is very real. I am delighted to find that there is a lot of enthusiasm for it both in European countries and in Britain. It took us a long time to form the Federation but now we have it we must all work to make it as strong as possible. It will be to the benefit of everyone at every level of the amusement industry in the Common Market countries."

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Around the Arcades

Video machines have had a tremendous world wide run of success. They are not quite so welcome in one British resort, however, Bournemouth is waging its own private war on videos and most other amusement machines.

THE RESORT THAT FROWNS ON AMUSEMENT MACHINES

Bournemouth, one of Britain's top seaside resorts, is heading for a head-on collision with amusement machine operators. Part of the problem seems to arise from confusion over the new generation of video games and some of the Council elders are apparently having nightmares about Bournemouth's up-market image. They see it being transformed into a South Coast Las Vegas almost overnight.

A new bye-law decrees that amusement machines may only be operated on the sea-front premises. But Bournemouth Corporation owns the entire sea-front.

Mr. Max D. Greene, Managing Director of Funtime Amusement Services Ltd., Bournemouth, who has installed a number of machines in premises off the sea-front said: "This has created a complete monopoly for the Corporation. It is a very nasty situation.

"They recently refused permission for the opening of an arcade in Bournemouth and the proposer appealed to the Minister for the Environment. The Minister overruled the Council's decision and the man went ahead and spent a lot of time and money getting the arcade ready for the season. But when he put in his application for a gaming machine licence he was turned down and told by the Council that they did not want this type of business in the town".

DICTATE

Even video machines get a black mark from Bournemouth Corporation. Cafe owner Ron Price found himself in hot water when he installed video machines in his Old Christchurch Road premises and is questioning the right of the council to "dictate" to him over his right to install the machines.

"We are not talking about gambling machines" he said. "These are amusement machines, like pinball machines which have been around for years.

"I put these video machines in last November and, out of the blue, I get a letter from the Council. But we will play it by the rules.

"We will put in a formal application and if it is turned down we will take it all the way to the High Court if necessary.

"What law does it contravene? Who does it hurt? Is it an iniquity to be amused in Bournemouth?"

Mr. Greene said: "The Corporation are building a big new Leisure Centre on the pier and this includes a large amusement arcade. On the sea-front itself they operate all the catering facilities, including five licensed bars. At the same time they are trying to tell us that video machines are out as far as premises away from the sea-front are concerned. There are already machines in the Pavilion, Anchor Bar, Quarterdeck and Neptune which are owned by the council. If they increased the number of machines they would be earning more mney for the ratepayers of Bournemouth."

But many members of Bournemouth Council are against having any more machines — video or otherwise. Councillor Mrs. Sheila McQueen, chairman of the Environmental Services Committee, says the Council does not want to encourage them "because if you get too many of these machines you attract the boisterous element". But she agreed that permission from her committee was not necessary because they were not gambling machines.

PITIFUL

One resident even wrote to the local Press informing them he was getting up a petition to persuade the Council to keep "machine mania" out of Bournemouth.

And some council members do not think Bournemouth is going far enough in its efforts to limit the amount of machines in the resort. One of them describes Bournemouth as being "well on the way to becoming a players' paradise, accompanied by all that we know goes w'th gambling and the like".

He goes on to say: "How sad it is that a majority in the council chamber can inflict on the large section of Bournemouth's population, which is very concerned about the way Bournemouth's council leaders are taking us down an entirely different road alien to our image as a completely family resort, an unpopular policy regarding its own undertaking, and in doing so has opened the flood gates for more amusement machine centres".

Mr. Greene said: "Most of the machines they are talking about are not gaming machines at all. Incredibly a lot of members of Bournemouth Council believe that amusement machines of any description attract a very low class of people. It really is a pitiful outlook."

An appeal against the refusal to allow gaming machines in the new arcade is now being carefully watched by members of the amusement industry in Bournemouth.

RUFFLER

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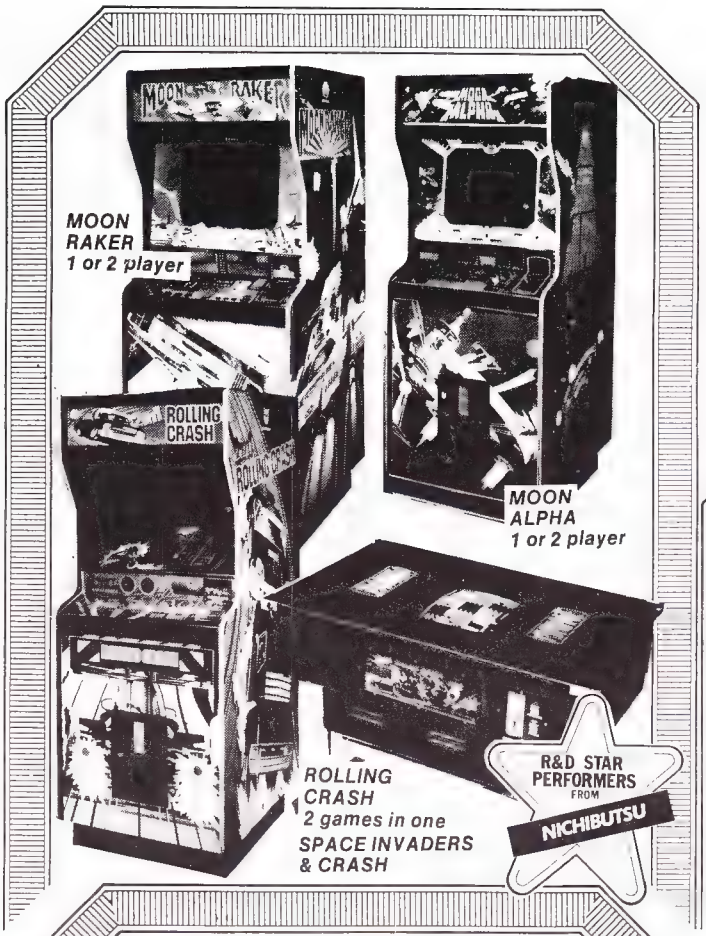

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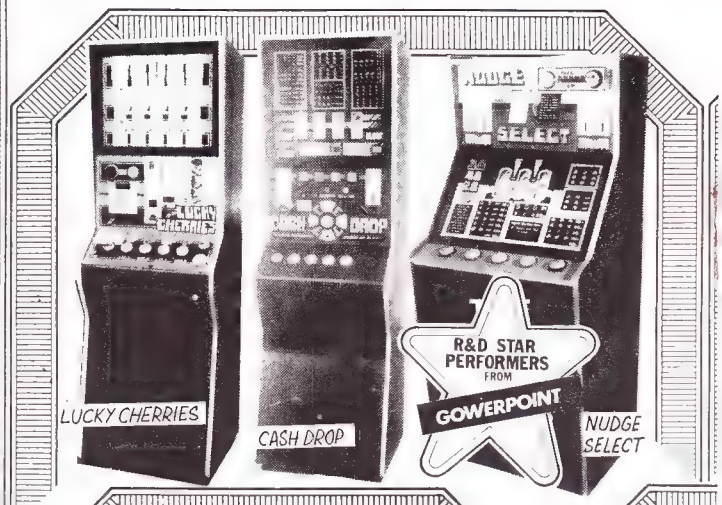
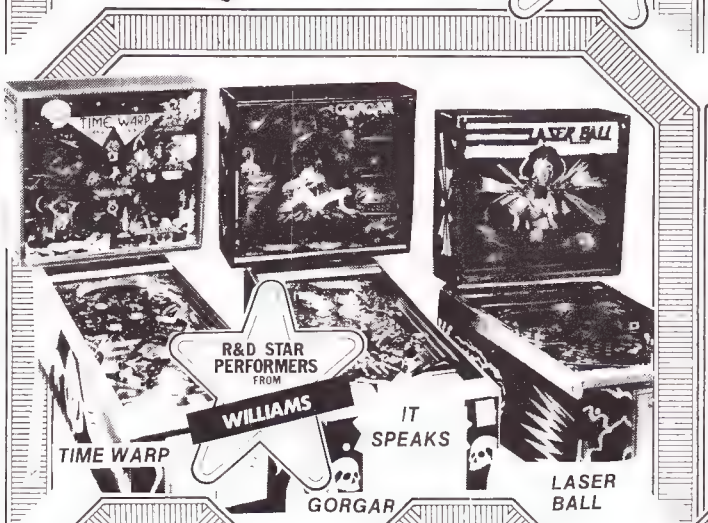


LUCKY CHERRIES

CASH DROP

R&D STAR PERFORMERS FROM GOWERPOINT

NUDGE SELECT



R&D STAR PERFORMERS FROM WILLIAMS

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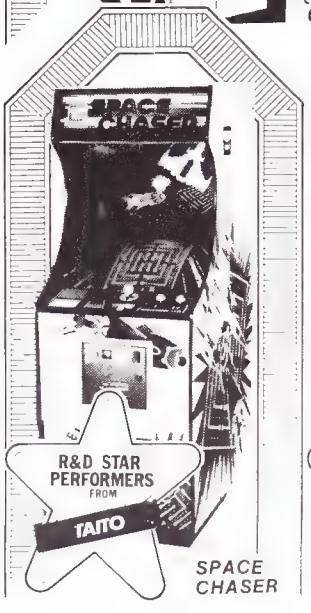
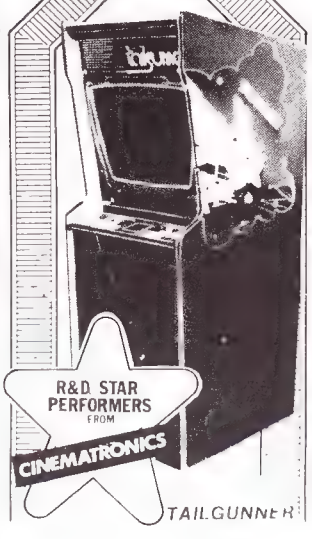


R&D STAR PERFORMERS FROM TAITO

SPACE CHASER



R&D STAR PERFORMERS FROM CINEMATRONICS

TAILGUNNER

R&D STAR PERFORMERS FROM ATARI

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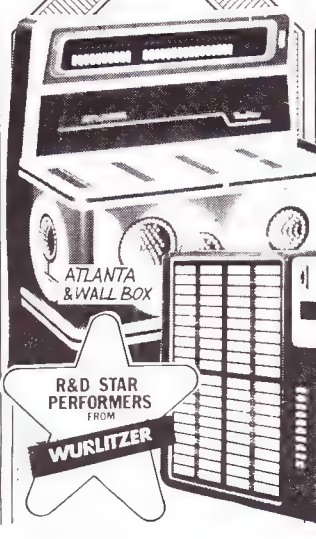

R&D STAR PERFORMERS FROM WURLITZER

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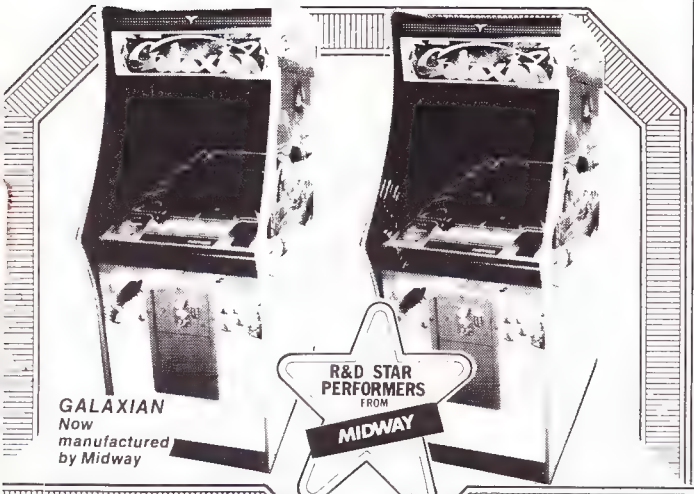

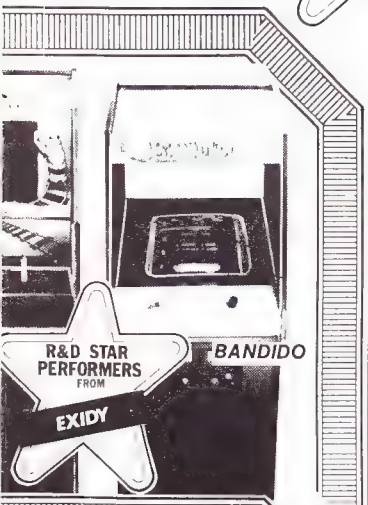

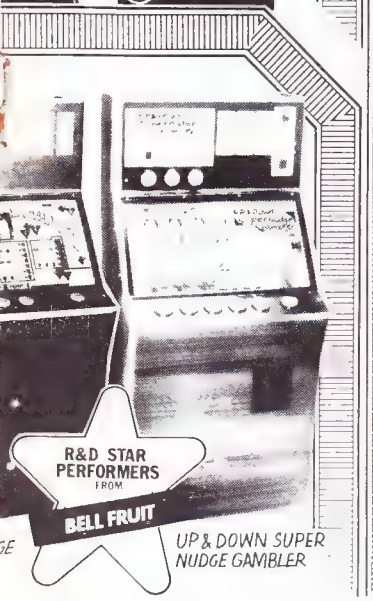

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10

THEY WERE RUSHING TO BOOK FOR BLACKPOOL WITH 12 MONTHS TO GO . . . . . .

Before the doors closed on the 19th Northern Amusement Equipment and Coin Operated Machine Exhibition at Blackpool's Norbreck Hydro the exhibitors were clamouring to book space for next year's show.

And the delighted organisers, Jack D. Rose (Exhibitions) Ltd. of Brighton, have already set about the task of finding more space for next year's exhibition.

It was the fourth year the exhibition had been held at the Norbreck and most exhibitors agreed it was the best so far — from a selling point of view as well as making new contacts.

Managing director of the organising firm, Mr. Jack D. Rose said: "We had no complaints and we were full to capacity. We are hoping to get more space next year, although we will have to spread out a bit. We are already using every inch of available space in the main area. We had to turn down quite a few people this year.

"Our policy is that once a person books space with us that space is his for as long as he wants it. Naturally everyone wants to be in the main hall but that is not possible."

The exhibition was originally held at the Winter Gardens and moved to the Golden Mile Centre before becoming established at the Norbreck four years ago.

Exhibitors were amazed at the amount of business generated at Blackpool. After the record-breaking A.T.E. at Alexandra Palace only two weeks earlier, many in the industry saw the Blackpool Exhibition as a contact-making exercise-cum-social occasion. Most of them were very happy to be proved wrong and reported extremely brisk sales, particularly on the first two days when there were many Scottish visitors present.

Lovely Dinah May, former Miss Great Britain, with the Galaxian on the Bell Fruit stand.

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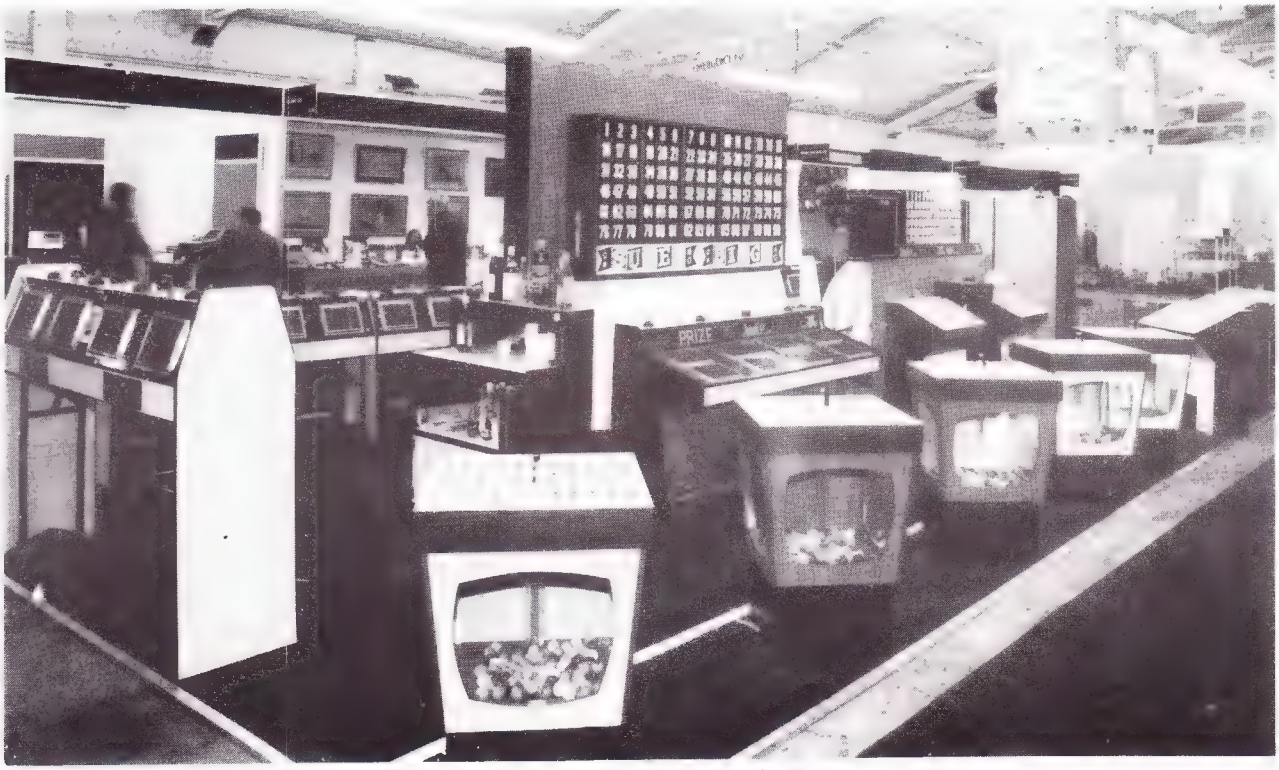

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GOLDEN SMILES FOR BLACKPOOL SHOW

Top: A bird's eye view from the balcony of the busy main area at the Northern Amusement Equipment and Coin Operated Machine Exhibition at Blackpool. The crowds poured in throughout the three days and most exhibitors did more business than they had forecast.

Left:
One small boy tries the machine that takes the puff out of blowing up balloons. It was shown by Model Coin Ltd., of Sheerness.

Right:
Jim Pryde, of London Coin, with Brenco's 4-Up Bingo Game which was a major attraction at both Blackpool and London shows.

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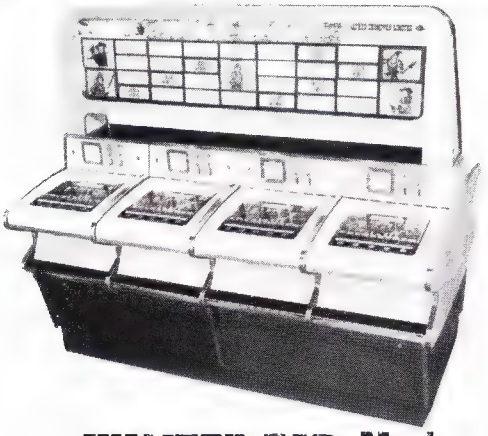

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THOSE VIDEO GAMES KNOCK-OUT DAVE

Dave Lee Travis, the disc jockey and radio and television personality with one of the best known faces in show business, is a self-confessed video game freak.

Below: Dave, in his element, with the machine all to himself.

When he arrived at the ATE to do promotional work on the Taito stand it was more a labour of love than a working chore. Dave immediately went to town on the firm's latest games, based on their famous Space Invaders and later said he was "knocked out" by the new challenges they offered.

Dave's enthusiasm for video machines is such that he has purchased three for use in his own home. They are very popular with friends and guests but Dave finds that an hour on the videos helps him relax after a busy day in the world of pop.

Top: Mandy Strong, Miss Space Invader, 1980, shows Dave the Space Invaders, Part II.

'SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL' MEANS 'NON' TO EXPORT ORDERS

Peter Robinson lost count of the business turned away at the recent ATE. peter, joint managing director of Century Electronics, of Oldham, chatted patiently with would-be customers from all over the world and quietly told them they would not be able to take delivery of his company's mini, wall-mounted video games.

He was not trying to commit commercial suicide, merely preserving the quality of Century's products.

Peter and his joint Managing Director, David Jones, firmly believe that small is beautiful. They are determined to put quality before mass production.

They employ 15 people at their Oldham factory and another 20 at centres in Leeds and Royton. And that is the way it is likely to remain in the foreseeable future.

The mini video which is only 11¾ inches deep and 14 inches wide was an instant winner with Century's customers. It was particularly popular with breweries because it took up so little space in the busiest of bars. But there are no plans to boost their production figures which run at 30 units a week for an all-British market.

Peter said: "We have no plans to expand. Some of the overseas buyers we turned down at the ATE were a little puzzled. We had to tell them we would not be able to supply them in the near future. But we took their names in case it is possible for them to manufacture under license later on.

"It may seem a little odd, turning down that sort of business. But we are determined not to sacrifice our standards. We have a small dedicated and talented workforce at the moment and this is the way both David and I want to keep it. Our back-up service is second to none. If we expanded rapidly some of that would have to fall by the way side and we do not want to do business that way. At the moment our customers know they can come and chat to the people who actually construct the equipment.

"We are selling our units as fast as we manufacture them and as far as I know we are the only manufacturers of this type of unit in the country. We intend to stay small and keep our quality. We are very concerned about quality."

Everything about Century Electronics is done on a personal basis. There are no distributors — customers deal direct with the firm.

The company was formed just over 12 months ago when Peter and David left their jobs as service managers with Music Hire Group in Leeds. Before joining Music Hire Peter had spent three years in the telecommunications industry and David served in the Royal Air Force as an avionics technician. In the early stages of their careers neither of them dreamed of a future in the amusement industry, let alone a company of their own manufacturing amusement equipment. Peter looks after the commercial side of the business while David concentrates on technological development.

They have received requests for the mini video from Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, France, Spain, Italy and Greece. But the equipment is likely to stay exclusive to the British market for a long time to come.

GP5 IS A CIVIC HIT

The Mayor of Lancaster, Coun. Mrs. Ivy Welldrake, let her chauffeur take a back seat when she visited an amusement machine exhibition in Morecambe.

Coun. Mrs. Welldrake was fascinated by Taito's GP5 Speed Race machine and Mr. Tom Harris, Marketing Manager of Fairfax's Northern operation, was happy to giver her tuitition without "L" plates. She handled the machine, which at times requires the reactions of a test pilot, very well considering it was her first attempt.

The Mayor had earlier opened the show, staged by Barry Robinson Leisure, of Lancaster, in conjunction with Fairfax. The firm's Managing Director, Mr. Barry Robinson, was delighted with the orders he took and the attendance. During the two-day exhibition, the firm's site tally was increased to more than 500.

Other Taito products included the Space Invaders Mark II, the Lunar Rescue, Space Chaser, Field Goal, and a number of cocktail tables including Safari Rally and Space Chaser. Products from other companies were also on show including Bell-Fruit, JPM and Ace.

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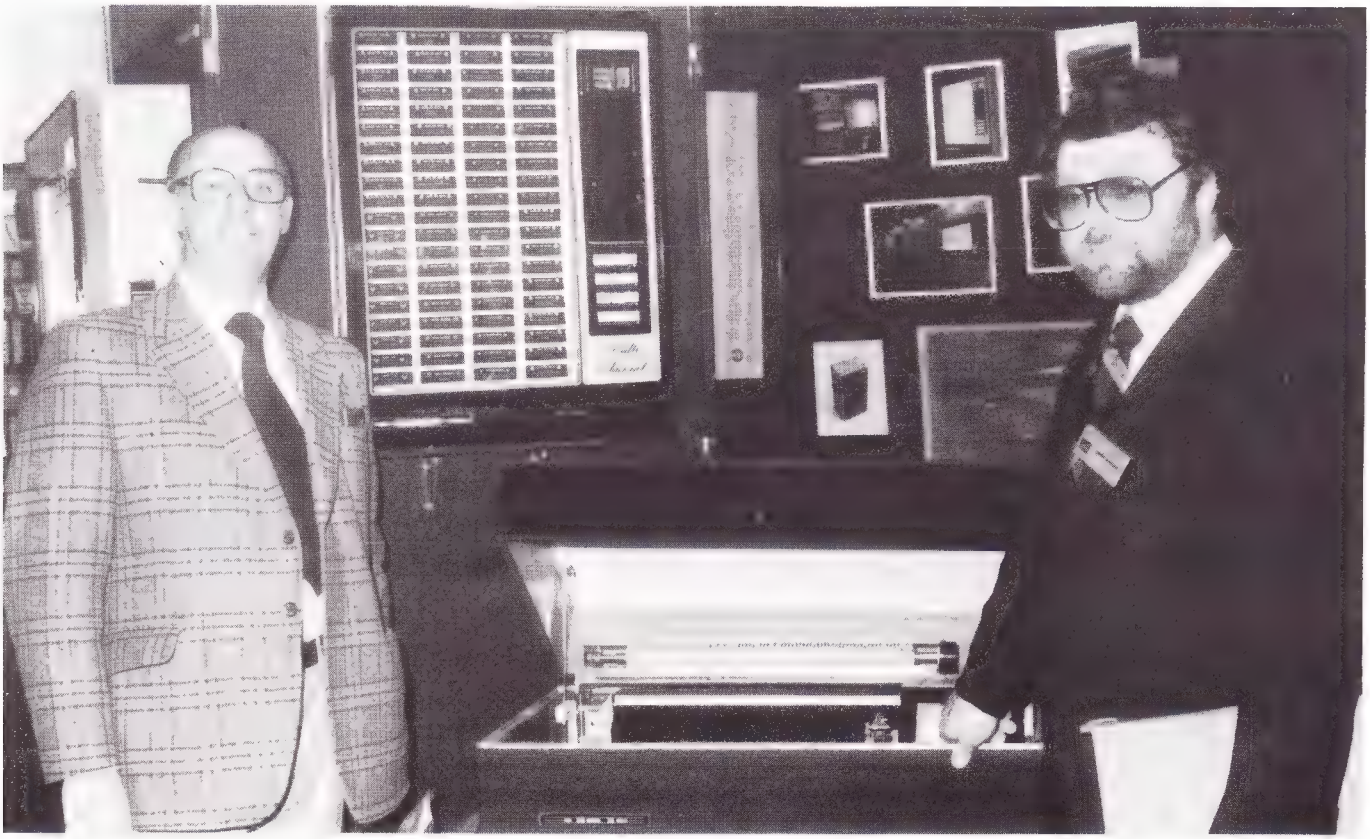

A lot of interest is being shown in the new model W.P.A. Hideaway system — the 80 Series — supplied by DMS Distribution, of Blackburn. The unit is finished in black vinyl "leather" cloth with silver trim and black oak finished bands. It is the only available Hideaway system that splits into two similar size units — an electronics pack and mechanism pack — and has an extremely high standard of external finish.

The split system makes the Hideaway installation much easier and simplifies storage and transport. Each unit has carrying handles and can be mounted together or side by side. All installation connections are made to the electronics pack and access to the mechanism pack is amazingly simple. Three quarters of the cabinet can be lifted off after releasing four internal toggle catches.

Because the system is based on what is described as "remanufactured;; Seeburg mechanisms it is extremely competitively priced. DMS Managing Director, Mr. David Standen, said: "Our assembly lines are working to capacity to cope with orders."

Two different styles of Wallbox are also being supplied by DMS. Operators have a choice between vertical and horizontal stylings from the same manufacturer. Combined with the W.P.A. Hideaway system these make a very flexible music system.

On operation the Wallboxes have proved themselves to be a reliable and popular addition to jukebox installations, sometimes doubling the earnings of sites. Mr. Standon said: "We believe these Wallboxes are the lowest priced on the market and excellent value."

Tops in Europe is Ramtek Aim

Ramtek, the Cheltenham based manufacturers of commercial video monitors, are aiming for a European goal. Commercial Director Maurice Husband said: "Our goal is to become the leading manufacturer of video monitors for the video games manufacturers of Europe in the early 1980's and wer are already well on the way to achieving this aim".

The firms plan to expand production and have produced improved versions of their colour monitors (codenamed VMCs) and monochrome monitors.

Commenting on the colour range, Mr. Husband said: "Manufacturers of commercial video games are turning more and more to colour and they appreciate the low cost and high quality of the Ramtek range which is backed by a unique 24-hour spares service and a full Ramtek guarantee".

The improved colour monitors are the 20, 22 and 26 inch models which made a very successful debut at last year's A.T.E. Now a 14-inch model has been added to the range.

The colour video monitors, which started pre-production evaluation last year, are claimed by the manufacturers to be the only low-cost British colour models on the market and are based on the Mullard tube system with an in-line gun. The overall size of the monitors is smaller than their overseas rivals and they have been designed for easier handling.

JUKE BOX TUNE-IN

By David Powell

THOSE BLASTS FROM THE PAST ARE BOUNCING BACK

Suddenly the oldies scene is alive again as more blasts from the past storm up the charts, either in their original form, or as up to date interpretations by new artistes.

The biggest and most unlikely oldies hit for a long time must be 'Green Onions' by BOOKER T & THE M.G'S. Despite being acknowledged as a 'classic' this record has NEVER been in the U.K. charts before. It was first released in 1962 as a B side in the States and eventually reached No. 3 after the radio systems jumped on it. It has always been a favourite with the soul/mod crowd, and the current 'mod' revival has rekindled interest in the tune.

The other 'big' oldie of recent months has been the MOODY BLUES 'Nights in White Satin'. A top ten hit in 1968 and again in 1972 this timeless gem has had a further lease of life, fuelled by a blank cassette commercial.

An intersting factor about both these records is that they will STILL continue to sell steadily even when their current chart activity has waned.

The SHADOWS have once again picked a winner with their fine interpretation of 'Riders in the Sky'. This was first a hit for Vaughn Munro in 1949 before the RAMRODS instrumental version in 1961. The song has always been popular in Rock 'N' Roll clubs and despite it's 'Disco' feel (which makes true Rockers cringe), the clear, crisp style of the SHADOWS version will retain its popularity for a long time to come.

Other reactivated songs in 1980 to date include ROCKY SHARPE AND THE REPLAYS 'Martian Hop' (not a touch on the RANDELLS original), the SILICON TEENS silicon rendtion of 'Judy in disguise'; the RAMONES 'Baby I Love You' (actually produced by the alive and kicking PHIL SPECTOR himself); the surprising choice of 'Singing the Blues' by DAVE EDMUNDS; DOLLAR'S classy 'I Want to Hold Your Hand'; the TOURISTS 'I Only Want to be With You' (late '79 really); and a poor 1980 cover of 'Working My Way Back to You' by the DETROIT SPINNERS.

Lots more oldies are already scheduled for early 1980 release. Apart from SYMARIPS highly enjoyable 'Skindhead Moon Stomp' (currently in the lower regions of the chart) and a great value-for-money MONKEES E.P. featuring 'I'm a Believer; and 'Daydream Believer', 'My Boy Lollipop' by MILLIE should be a good seller when released by Isand next month.

Already released on the OLD GOLD label are some 50's and 60's classics including 'Terry' by TWINKLE; 'Donna' by RITCHIE VALENS; 'The Streak' and 'Misty' (a double sider) by RAY STEVENS and PAPER LACE'S 1970's hits 'Billy Don't be a Hero' and 'The Night Chicago Dies'. Also set for release on Old Gold soon as 'Freight Train' (1956) by NANCY WHISKEY and CHAS McDEVITT; 'We Will Make Love' (1957); 'Lollipop' (1958) by the CHORDETTES and 'Zorba's Dance' (1965) MARCELLO MINERBI. All these should be particularly popular on juke boxes as they haven't been on the market for many many years.

Generally then, a very healthy oldies scene at present with lots more to come.

Ramtek Continued

Mr. Husband said the new 14-inch colour monitor was being introduced to cater for the rapidly growing table-top market in video games and added: "Perhaps we might see the Japanese craze for video games gripping Europe and the flourishing of coffee houses filled with table-top machines being played endlessly by games enthusiasts".

The amusement machine industry is also showing a lot of interest in Ramtek's prototype security monitor which will form part of a security system designed specially for amusement arcade and leisure centre operators. The company hope to have the system on the market in the near future.

Ramtek's backroom boys have also come up with a number of improvements on the range of monochrome monitors, including the VM20-2M which has been designed to be pin-compatible with monitors fitted in imported amusement machines.

Mr. Husband said: "We are planning to increase our production of both colour and monochrome monitors in the next few months to match rising demand and, following our merger with Taito, we aim to continue our policy of improving our product ranges and back-up service during the course of the next few years."

THE MOODY BLUES

POOL SHOT POOL SHOT

The Hurricane that blows in the Business

Extra production staff are being taken on at the Flint, North Wales, factory of Bristol Coin Equipment to cope with a bulging order book for the company's new Hurricane pool table.

Orders, mainly from the A.T.E. and Blackpool exhibitions, have flooded in and include an export order to Norway.

Bristol Coin's David Nichols said: "The whole of the billiard industry is enjoying something of a boom at the moment — billiards, snooker and pool. There was a bit of a drop in pool sales about two years ago but now we are working absolutely flat out to satisfy the demand for pool tables. I think replacement orders are accounting for a lot of the business. There is a terrific demand at the moment. Even second hand pool and snooker tables are attracting the sort of prices that were unheard of a couple of years ago. Obviously we are very happy with the situation, especially in difficult times like these."

European operators are showing a lot of interest in British-made pool equipment. "We already have our fair share of the export market, but we feel there is a vast potential in Europe", said Mr. Nichols.

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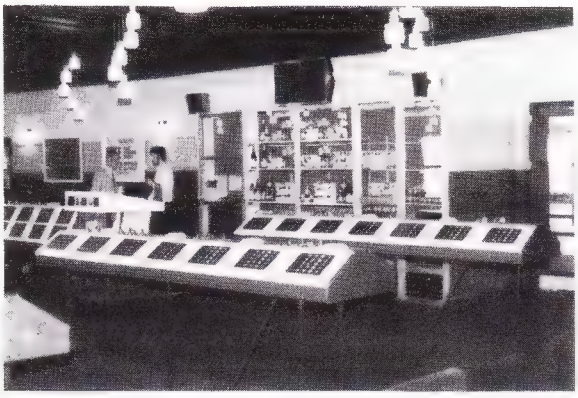

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HAZEL GROVE'S SLEEK NEW WALLBOX

After a tough, ten-month site test programme, Hazel Grove Music Company's new Playmate juke box wall cabinet goes into production in April.

And already the order books for the 200 selection box are piling up at the firm's Cheshire headquarters.

It is designed to be compatible with all types of Rowe-Ami juke boxes and comes in colour schemes based on gold and silver. Its special curved shape enables it to blend in any type of room.

Hazel Grove director barrie Denton said: "The response has been terrific — we have a very big order book. We have tried to bring cosmetics into the design. Before we planned the Playmate we had a good look round at wall boxes and were not satisfied with what we saw. We will be using the box in our own operation as well as selling it. We are delighted at the fantastic reaction to it."

Hazel Grove have redesigned the runway system on their pool tables with the introduction of injection moulded clips and captivating zinc-coated rods which give the tables greater reliability and longer life.

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